



Article Alert

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Columbus Day 2012



Columbus arrives in the New World
(Print and Photograph Division Library of Congress)

Background

Columbus Day is the U.S. federal holiday commemorating explorer Christopher Columbus' landing in the New World on October 12, 1492. It also celebrates the cultural heritage of Italian Americans, since many scholars believe Columbus was born in Genoa, Italy.

Columbus Day has been an annual holiday in the United States since 1937. Initially celebrated on October 12, it was moved to the second Monday in October to give workers a long holiday weekend.

Italian immigrants first observed Columbus Day as a celebration of their heritage in 1866 in New York.

According to the U.S. Census, there are more than 18 million people of Italian ancestry in the United States, making them the fourth-largest ancestry group.

The holiday continues to evoke discussions about the Age of Exploration and the transformations it provoked, including the injustices done to indigenous peoples. Some localities in the United States have decreed alternatives to Columbus Day to honor the original inhabitants of the islands where the explorer landed. In California, the cities

of Berkeley, Sebastopol and Santa Cruz have replaced Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day. South Dakota renamed the holiday Native American Day, and Alabama celebrates a combination Columbus Day and American Indian Heritage Day. Hawaii calls it Discovery Day to commemorate the arrival of Polynesian settlers. The Census Bureau estimates the population of Native Americans and Alaska Natives at 5 million.

About Columbus

Columbus made four trans-Atlantic voyages between 1492 and 1504 under the sponsorship of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. These voyages changed the map of the world. By opening up the Americas to European settlement — and exploitation — they also altered history. Columbus was not the first European to cross the Atlantic successfully. Viking sailors are believed to have established a short-lived settlement in Newfoundland sometime in A.D. 1000 and scholars have argued for a number of other possible pre-Columbian landings. Columbus, however, initiated the lasting encounter between Europeans and the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere.

In the late 15th century, Portugal dominated the effort to establish a sea route between Europe and India by circumnavigating Africa. It was with an eye toward outflanking the Portuguese that Isabella I of Spain authorized an expedition in which Columbus would sail west from Spain, aiming for India. This, of course, presumed that the world was round; many educated people already understood this. Columbus set sail with 90 men in August 1492 on three ships: the Santa Maria, the Niña and the Pinta.

After sailing west for five weeks, the expedition reached an island now part

of the British Bahamas on October 12. Columbus named it San Salvador and believed he had found a new route to India, hence the use of the word "Indians" to describe the peoples he met. Columbus made three subsequent voyages and died believing he had found a new route to India and Asia, and not, in fact, the gateway to North and South America.

The Celebrations

Because the United States evolved out of British colonization rather than the Spanish claims of Columbus and his successors, the United States for many years did not celebrate Columbus' "discovery," although ceremonies were held on the 300th and 400th anniversaries of his first landing.

In 1937, Congress and President Franklin D. Roosevelt made Columbus Day, October 12, a national holiday, largely because of lobbying by the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal and charitable organization. It was moved to the second Tuesday in October in 1971.

U.S. federal government offices and most banks close on Columbus Day. Schools typically remain open, as do most businesses. New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston and Denver are some of the cities that hold festive Columbus Day/Italian heritage parades and celebrations with colorful costumes, music and Italian food. Berkeley, meanwhile, has the Indigenous Peoples Day Powwow and Indian Market.

A number of other nations celebrate Columbus' voyages with annual holidays. Among them are Discovery Day in the Bahamas and Colombia, and Día de la Resistencia Indígena in Venezuela. It is called Fiesta Nacional in Spain, and Día de la Raza in much of Latin America, in honor of the Hispanic culture's diverse roots.

Read more: <http://goo.gl/tlhqb>

U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION HIGHLIGHTS

KANDIDAT PRESIDEN AMERIKA SERIKAT



KANDIDAT PARTAI DEMOKRAT

Presiden Barack H. Obama adalah Presiden Amerika Serikat ke 44.

Kisah Obama adalah kisah negara Amerika—nilai-nilai masyarakat

kelas menengah dengan kekeluargaan yang kuat, kerja keras dan pendidikan sebagai cara untuk berada di depan dan keyakinan bahwa hidup yang penuh berkat harus dijalani dengan membaktikan diri pada orang lain.

Presiden Obama lahir di Hawaii pada 4 Agustus 1961 dari ayah yang berasal Kenya dan ibu dari Kansas, Amerika. Obama dibesarkan oleh kakeknya yang bertugas di Angkatan Darat di Patton dan neneknya yang bekerja di bank. Setelah menyelesaikan pendidikannya di perguruan tinggi, dengan bantuan beasiswa dan pinjaman siswa, Presiden Obama pindah ke Chicago di mana beliau aktif dalam kelompok gereja yang berkiprah membangun komunitas yang hancur akibat penutupan pabrik baja.

Selanjutnya beliau melanjutkan studinya di Fakultas Hukum dimana beliau menjadi warga Amerika keturunan Afrika pertama yang menjabat sebagai presiden di *Harvard Law Review*. Setelah lulus, beliau kembali ke Chicago, mengambil bagian dalam *voter registration drive* (suatu usaha untuk mendaftarkan warga yang berhak untuk memilih, namun belum terdaftar) mengajar hukum konstitusional di Universitas Chicago dan tetap aktif berperan dalam komunitas lokal.

Pengalaman Obama bekerja di layanan publik selama beberapa tahun, didasarkan pada keyakinannya yang kuat bahwa masyarakat bisa disatukan dalam tujuan politik. Di Senat negara bagian Illinois, Obama meloloskan reformasi etik yang telah diusahakan selama 25 tahun, melakukan pemotongan pajak bagi keluarga pekerja dan memperluas layanan kesehatan bagi anak-anak dan orang tua. Sebagai seorang Senator

AS, Obama mampu melampaui batasan-batasan dalam meloloskan reformasi lobi yang belum pernah dilakukan sebelumnya, melarang penggunaan senjata paling berbahaya di dunia, dan membawa transparansi dalam pemerintahan dengan menyajikan anggaran belanja negara secara online.

Beliau terpilih sebagai presiden Amerika Serikat ke 44 pada 4 November, 2012 dan dilantik pada 20 Januari 2009. Obama dan istrinya, Michele memiliki dua putri yaitu Malia, 13 tahun dan Sasha, 10 tahun.

Sumber: Official White House Biography



KANDIDAT PARTAI REPUBLIK

Mitt Romney lahir pada 12 Maret 1947 di Detroit, Michigan. Lulus sarjana dari Universitas Brigham Young pada 1971, beliau kemudian melanjutkan

studinya di *Harvard Law School* dan *Harvard Business School* dan mendapatkan gelar hukum dan M.B.A. pada 1975.

Mitt Romney menikah dengan Ann Davies di tahun 1969; mereka memiliki lima anak laki-laki yaitu Tagg, Matt, Josh, Ben dan Craig.

Beliau adalah anggota Gereja *Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, atau lebih dikenal dengan Gereja Mormon

Anak dari George Romney, gubernur Michigan dan calon dari partai Republik (dikalahkan oleh Richard Nixon pada 1968), Mitt Romney memulai karirnya sebagai pebisnis. Pada 1984 beliau mendirikan perusahaan investasi Bain Capital. Pada 1994 beliau ikut dalam pemilihan Senat di Massachusetts tetapi kemudian kalah dari petahana Edward Kennedy.

Pada 1999, Romney mulai mendapat perhatian publik secara nasional ketika dia menjabat presiden *Salt Lake Organizing Committee*. Beliau berhasil menyelamatkan Olimpiade Musim Dingin 2002 dari kegagalan finansial dan etik dan kemudian sukses menyelenggarakan *Salt Lake Olympic Games* tahun 2002. Pada 2004 Romney menulis buku *Turnaround: Crisis, Leader-*

ship, and the Olympic Games.

Romney membawa kesuksesan dari Olimpiade ke ranah politik saat terpilih menjadi gubernur Massachusetts pada 2003. Di masa jabatannya sebagai gubernur, Romney mengawasi potongan defisit sebanyak \$3 juta dollar. Romney juga menandatangani reformasi hukum pelayanan kesehatan bagi hampir seluruh warga Massachusetts.

Setelah menjabat satu periode, beliau menolak untuk dipilih kembali dan mengumumkan diri menjadi calon presiden Amerika Serikat, tetapi kemudian kalah dari John McCain. Romney menghabiskan dana kampanye \$110 juta dollar, termasuk \$45 juta dollar dari uang pribadinya. Pada Maret 2010 Romney menerbitkan buku berjudul *No Apology: The Case for American Greatness*. Buku tersebut masuk dalam daftar *New York Times Best Seller*.

Pada 2 Juni, 2011, Mitt Romney mengumumkan secara resmi kampanyenya untuk 2012. Pengkritik keras Presiden Obama, Romney kukuh mempertahankan nilai-nilai standard Republican di bidang perpajakan, ekonomi dan perang terhadap teror. Kritik Romney terhadap Obama menyebabkan dia harus mengubah posisi awalnya terhadap beberapa isu-isu kunci termasuk aborsi, yang sebenarnya dia tentang, dan reformasi layanan kesehatan – Romney menentang program reformasi layanan kesehatan prakarsa Obama, yang sebenarnya mirip dengan program layanan kesehatan Massachusetts ketika Romney menjabat sebagai gubernur.

Sumber: © 2012 A&E Television Networks.

Related Resource



U.S. Elections 2012
(IRC Information Package)

<http://tinyurl.com/ce27m57>

U.S. ELECTIONS 2012

1. **FOR VOTERS IT'S STILL THE ECONOMY: ENERGY, TERRORISM, IMMIGRATION LESS IMPORTANT THAN IN 2008** (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, September 2012)

As Barack Obama and Mitt Romney prepare for

their first debate on Oct. 3, the issues at the top of the voters' agenda have changed little since 2008. Fully 87% of registered voters say that the economy will be very important to their vote, while 83% say jobs will be very important to their vote. Four years ago, the economy also was the top priority for voters. In August 2008, an identi-

cal 87% said the economy was very important to their vote, and in October 2008, 80% rated jobs as very important. Full report is available online at <http://goo.gl/REGHF>

Continue to page 3

U.S. ELECTIONS 2012 *(continued from page 2)*

2. U.S. DEFENSE AND THE 2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (Brooking Institution, September 2012)

Following the Republican and Democratic national conventions, the fall electoral season kicks into high gear. Among the many issues being debated are those focused on U.S. defense: How

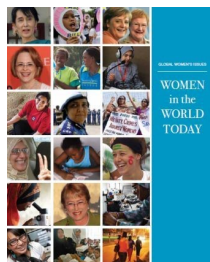
would the presidential candidates shape America's future armed forces? Where do they agree and where do they disagree? Which broader realities, both within their control and beyond it, will affect their decisions on these matters? On September 10, the 21st Century Defense Initiative at Brookings hosted a discussion examining

the defense plans of Governor Mitt Romney and President Barack Obama and, more generally, the prospects for the American military and the U.S. defense budget in 2013 and beyond. Full report is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/cw2seqj>

U.S. DEMOCRACY & GLOBAL ISSUES

3. Slaughter, Anne-Marie. **WHY WOMEN STILL CAN'T HAVE IT ALL.** The Atlantic Monthly (Jul/Aug 2012).

Eighteen months into my job as the first woman director of policy planning at the State Department, a foreign-policy dream job that traces its origins back to George Kennan, I found myself in New York, at the United Nations' annual assemblage of every foreign minister and head of state in the world. When people asked why I had left government, I explained that I'd come home not only because of Princeton's rules (after two years of leave, you lose your tenure), but also because of my desire to be with my family and my conclusion that juggling high-level government work with the needs of two teenage boys was not possible. Available online at <http://goo.gl/4r2LN>



Women in the World Today ebook from IIP Digital shows how far the we have come since 1995 when Hillary Clinton joined the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Each chapter reflects one of the 12 points in the action plan we developed in Beijing. At the State Department, we believe elevating the status of women and girls in their societies is not only the right thing to do, it is also the smart thing to do. Woman and girls are often a community's greatest untapped resource, which makes investing in them a powerful and effective way to promote international development and our diplomatic agenda. This book tells some stories of women leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs, educators and politicians leading

change in their communities. It also explores what we need to do now, so that all countries can fully benefit from the wisdom, compassion and energy women bring to every aspect of society. Full text is available at <http://goo.gl/5gLFfe>

4. **WOMEN IN THE WORLD TODAY** (eBook, IIP Digital September 2012)

5. Porter, Charlene **SHARED RESPONSIBILITY IS NEW STANDARD IN AIDS RESPONSE** (IIP Digital September 2012)

Nations that are home to some of the world's worst HIV/AIDS epidemics are also among the countries working the hardest to take responsibility for care of people living with HIV/AIDS, according to U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. In New York City September 26, she spoke at an event organized by UNAIDS on the fringes of the U.N. General Assembly session. Read more at <http://goo.gl/Vy5wo>

U.S. EDUCATION, SOCIETY & VALUES

6. Chen, Angela. **U.S. PROGRAM ENCOURAGES FOREIGN FEMALE STUDENTS TO DREAM BIG** (Chronicle of Higher Education, August 2012)

Enkhbayar, a Mongolian student from a family of shepherders, is quite literally disappointed by the White House. "This is it?" she asks. "It's so small," she says, compared with the grand mansions on American soap operas she grew up watching. But while the president's home hasn't lived up to her expectations, the impact of the program that brought her here, she says, has been huge: "I started to dream about very big things." Enkhbayar is one of 20 female students who were here this summer for the inaugural Global Women's Leadership Institute, part of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's Women in Public Service project. With a grant from the State Department (which requested that The Chronicle use only the participants' first names), Saint Mary's College, a women's institution in Notre Dame, Ind. Full text is available via eLibraryUSA Database.

7. Goldberg, Beverly **WHAT'S NEW IN LIS SCHOOLS** (School Library Journal, August 2012)

"Librarians of the future will be knowledge navigators. They will understand digital resources as well as printed books and other formats. Their services will not be restricted by physical location, either of the materials or of themselves." That was what Deanna B. Marcum, then on the cusp of creating the Council on Library and Information Resources, predicted 15 years ago about the trajectory of librarianship into the 21st century ("Transforming the Curriculum; Transforming the Profession," AL, Jan. 1997, p. 35-38). Full text is available via eLibraryUSA Database.

8. **LAS VEGAS, NEVADA: AN ENTERTAINMENT ECONOMY LIGHTS UP THE DESERT** (IIP Digital, September 2012)

Las Vegas dazzles like a sparkling jewel in its southwestern desert setting. A visit to this "Entertainment Capital of the World" captures not only the man-made spectacles of neon, glass

and steel but also the more rustic natural beauty of sun, sand and stone. Here entertainment of all types for all tastes abounds, and the wonders of the world — both ancient and modern — are recreated for the enjoyment of guests. Read more: <http://tinyurl.com/9qr57qy>

eLibraryUSA database (<http://elibraryusa.state.gov/>) offers access to around 30 authoritative databases that covers broad range of resources about learning English, American history and culture, health, business, resources for kids and more.

To training and personal account, please request to ircjakarta@state.gov.

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